



H.RES. 937 – Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the emergency communications services provided by the American Red Cross are vital resources for military service members and their families

FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 937 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Michael Burgess (R-TX) on January 23, 2008. The resolution was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, but was never considered.

H.Res. 937 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 9, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.Res. 937 resolves that it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the emergency communications services provided by the American Red Cross are vital for providing communication between military service members and their families during emergencies or other important events.

BACKGROUND

The American Red Cross was founded in Washington, D.C. on May 21, 1881, by Clara Barton and several acquaintances. Ms. Barton modeled the concept for the American Red Cross after the International Red Cross, which she became familiar with while visiting Europe after the Civil War. Ms. Barton headed the American Red Cross for twenty-three years, during which time the organization became involved with domestic disaster relief efforts and provided aid to the U.S. military during the Spanish-American War.

The American Red Cross was first chartered by Congress in 1900, and again in 1905. This charter remains in effect today, and establishes the purposes of the American Red Cross, which is to serve as a medium between members of the American armed forces and their families, as well as provide national and international disaster relief.

The American Red Cross operates an emergency communications service for military families twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. In the event of the death or serious illness of a family member, the birth of a service member's child or grandchild, or for other emergencies, military families are able to contact the American Red Cross to relay accurate, complete, and verified descriptions of the emergency to service members on a mission, in training, transferring between bases, or on a ship at sea.

STAFF CONTACT

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